

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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TAGS: PFOR PORG OAS MX CU

SUBJ: MEXICAN REACTION TO QUITO MFM

REF: MEXICO 9439

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S REMARK THAT "THE OAS IS VIRTUALLY DEAD" GOT THE HEADLINES IN MOST MEXICAN PAPERS, MAIN THRUST OF HIS PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS REFLECTED HOPE THAT NEW LIFE COULD YET BE BREATHED INTO THAT BODY. PRESS PREDICTABLY CRITICIZED THE FAILURE TO TERMINATE THE OAS SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA IN NEWS STORIES, EDITORIALS, CARTOONS AND COLUMNS NOV 13 AND 14, CITING THIS AS PROOF THAT THE OAS NO LONGER REFLECTS THE DEMOCRATIC WILL OF LATIN AMERICA. END SUMMARY.

2. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH MEXICAN CORRESPONDENTS IN TRIESTE, ITALY, NOV 13, PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA REPORTEDLY WARNED THAT IN ITS PRESENT FORM, THE OAS CANNOT SURVIVE AND THAT IT SHOULD BE RESTRUCTURED IN ORDER TO PERMIT IDEOLOGICAL PLURALISM AND DEMOCRATIC MEASURES TO PREVAIL WITHIN THE SYSTEM (E.E. ELIMINATE THE "OBSOLETE" VOTING SYSTEM WHICH ALLOWS A MINORITY TO VETO THE DECISION OF

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THE MAJORITY). ADDITIONALLY, HE POINTEDLY STATED THAT

"NO COUNTRY SHOULD BE PREDOMINANT IN THE ORGANIZATION"
AND PREDICTED THAT ALL HEMISPHERIC NATIONS WILL NORMALIZE
RELATIONS WITH CUBA WITHIN 7 OR 8 MONTHS.

3. INFLUENTIAL LEFTIST DAILY EXCELSIOR TERMED THE FAILURE
"A MORTAL WOUND", AND ASSERTED THAT DESPITE THE US POSITION
AND DESIRE TO BE DECEPTIVE, US MANIPULATIONS WERE OBVIOUSLY
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURE. EXCELSIOR CONCLUDED ITS
EDITORIAL BY ASKING, "HAS NOT THE HOUR ARRIVED TO CRYSTALIZE
THE IDEA OF STARTING OVER WITH A NEW ORGANIZATION WHICH
WOULD BE BORN WITHOUT THE CHRONIC DEFECTS OF THE OAS?"
RADICAL LEFTIST EL DIA SAID THAT THE QUITO DECISION BRINGS
TO A HEAD "THE CRISIS OF THE DECOMPOSITION OF OAS AS A CONTROL
TOOL OF THE US.

4. IN ADDITION TO TRADITIONAL CRITICISM OF THE OAS FROM THE
LEFT, THE MODERATE AND CONSERVATIVE PRESS EXPRESSED DISMAY
AT THE RESULTS OF THE QUITO CONFERENCE AND SPECULATED ON ITS
IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF THE OAS. CONSERVATIVE EL HERALDO
EDITORIALIZED "WE BELIEVE, UNFORTUNATELY, THE OAS NOW HAS
DEEPLY ROOTED DEFECTS, AND THAT DURING ITS LONG EXISTENCE,
IT HAS BEEN GOING UP BLIND ALLEYS WHICH NOW PRESENT
SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES." IN AN UNCHARACTERISTIC ATTACK,
EL UNIVERSAL BLAMED US PRESSURE FOR THE "LAMENTABLE AND
IGNOMINIOUS RESULTS" OF THE QUITO CONFERENCE.

5. SEMI-OFFICIAL EL NACIONAL NOTED IN A NOV 14
EDITORIAL THAT THE ONLY LOSER AT QUITO WAS THE OAS ITSELF
SINCE THE SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA WERE OF NO USE TO ANYONE
AND SINCE THE 12 NATIONS WHICH VOTED TO LIFT THEM HAVE
ANNOUNCED THEY WILL NO LONGER RESPECT THE SANCTIONS.
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6. COMMENT: IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT NEITHER PRESIDENT
ECHEVERRIA NOR EL NACIONAL SEIZED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
ATTACK THE USG AND WERE RESTRAINED IN THEIR CRITICISM
OF THE OAS. THE MEXICAN LEADER STRESSED THAT HE PREFERS
TO RESTRUCTURE THE OAS RATHER THAN REPLACE IT WITH ANY
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NEW ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD EXCLUDE THE US.

7. WHILE FOREIGN SECRETARY RABASA'S CONFIDENT NOV 5
PREDICTION OF SUCCESS IN OBTAINING ENOUGH VOTES TO LIFT
THE SANCTIONS AT QUITO MAY HAVE BEEN MERE POSTURING
DESIGNED TO SWAY WAIVERING STATES (REFTEL), THE FAILURE OF
THIS EFFORT FOR WHICH THE GOM OBVIOUSLY LOBBIED CANNOT
HELP BUT FAN FURTHER CRITICISM OF RABASA AND PERHAPS WEAKEN

HIS POSITION IN GOM COUNCILS. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
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